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Shining Tea Room

Public Group active 1 hour, 47 minutes ago

Shining maidens take tea together and talk about everything the sun and moon shine upon.

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Harmony and Conflict (13 posts)

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- Myriam Hildotter said 1 day, 1 hour ago:

After yesterday's Service and watching Suite Precure, I have been thinking of things. Heee…I do tend to think a lot.

I am becoming aware of the fact that what I used to think of as a problem of procrastination and a tendency to seem introverted in the Pit is really an avoidance of something in the Pit. I had *thought* it was the avoidance of conflict, but in a sense, that did not ring true. My Tellurian occupation (which I am now working on leaving) is one that has a LOT of conflict, and there are times I do not mind it. I also have little difficulty with intellectual discussions, even those that seem somewhat contentious. I have also been watching Suite Precure. There are a few Maids here that have tried to watch Suite Precure, but were turned off by the conflict, yet, I watched it and found tremendous meaning it in.

Through this I realized what it *is* that I am sensitive to. What I am sensitive to is disharmony, which is not precisely the same as conflict. I can manage conflict when it is harmonious. You could ask, how can conflict be harmonious? Well, conflict can be contained within a dance. For example, an intellectual discussion *should* be contained within that dance. There are rules (albeit unspoken) for these discussions. One of these rules, is that the discussion should never get personal. One talks about the ideas, not the person, for example. When those “rules” get broken, I get quite upset. Conflict can also be harmonious if it is bound in an atmosphere of civility and order, such as sports or other competitions.

There can also be disharmony in the absence of manifest conflict. For example, if someone is acting enormately. An example of which would be if someone came here and was referring to adults with given names without honorifics. Even if no one said anything about it, and there was no manifest conflict, there would be a disharmony that would feel almost painful.

Anyways, I am realizing that in pretty much all cases in which I found myself avoiding a task or a social situation to the point of neglecting duties or abandoning a social contact, it has been in situations where there has been serious disharmony, and I could not see a way to come to harmony or bring the situation to a harmonious resolution. I also realize that when it is hard for me to let something go, to the point of actually creating conflict, it is because there is disharmony, and I am

trying very hard (heee…with mixed success) to restore harmony. I think that I am quite sensitive to disharmony in general. I am thinking of in music, when there is a piece of music when the final chord is not resolved (for those of you who have any musical training, you will know what I am saying….and even one who does not know music can usually hear when this happens). It is jarring. Often one needs just one more note or chord to resolve the phrase.

Hee…I think that is also a reason that I love and study astrology. I enjoy being able to *see* the heavenly harmony in the movements of the heavenly bodies.

Anyways, this piece of self revelation was quite helpful for me. I am not sure *exactly* how….but it feels helpful.

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- Elefarya Rosamunda, Portia Chandrick, Pooka said 1 day ago:

  Rayati, Portia Chandrick here. (Rosa-chei giggles in the background…of *course* the Kadorian comes out for this!)

  I think this distinction, between conflict and disharmony, is a very important one and you've achieved a small act of brilliance in bringing it to light.

  The most important thing is that conflict is not in itself bad, but must *at all times* be in service to harmony. Harmony is the natural mistress of all things, and conflict is a very poor mistress indeed.

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- Sushuri said 1 day ago:

> I think “shining harmony” is really more than just a name for us! Our Lady of Harmony (and our Lady of Amity – Sai Thamë and Sai Sushuri) really are the rulers of our Protectorate. Harmony/Amity are our *fundamental* values.
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> I was thinking the other day that English has no word for 和 “wa”, which is generally translated as “harmony”. Harmony is not a bad word – after all it reflects Sai Thamë’s rulership of music, but it *is* a musical analogy. As someone noted, had our site simply been called “Daughters of Harmony” it would have sounded like a vocal quartet. There is no way in English to make it clear that one means “wa” without an explanatory clause.
>
> I think not having a specific word shows that for the Anglosphere the concept of “wa” is certainly not fundamental. Someone said “Americans have no word for wa because they have no wa”, which may or may not be an exaggeration, but it certainly has some truth to it!
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> To Herthelani, wa, or harmony, is a fundamental instinct and need. I think that is why 不和 fuwa, disharmony, affects us so badly

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- Myriam Hildotter said 23 hours, 59 minutes ago:

> I think it is right in that there is no word for wa in English, because there is no wa. I do not think that is an exaggeration at all. In the U.S., in particular, there is a sense of protecting one’s “rights” and wanting things to be “fair.” There is also a lot of talk of “justice.”

Now, of course, all of these things are also within the realm of Sai Thamë, but they all have a Vikhelic overtone to them as well. Also, many of these “rights” are really about the individual, and there is an atomized quality to the concepts of “fairness” and “justice” in the American psyche. Wa, as I feel and understand it, is beyond an individual. It is not about my “rights”, but about what *is* right. I am thinking of the analogy of someone using a given name for an adult without an honorific on this site. I personally might not mind it, or it could be something I overlook, but it would create fuwa and would feel disruptive to *everyone*, I think. I am also thinking of the concept of “rights” regarding this. A typical American response to being told not to do this might be to complain about having the “right” to address me in the manner she wanted to. Technically, that may be accurate…well, it would be if this were a public forum where 1st Amendment “rights” would apply (which it is not). Still, exercising that “right” would create fuwa, which would make things quite unpleasant for many of us.

Thank you for introducing us to the Japanese words, wa and fuwa, which of course, are very closely tied to thamë and athamë, but they are not precisely the same, are they? It feels to me that there are slight differences these words…even though they are closely related.

I do find, though, that musical analogies are quite helpful in describing wa and fuwa, at least for me. Heee…that could be because I am limited by the English language. But fuwa to me *feels* like disharmonious music, a wrong note, or an instrument out of tune. I have the same visceral sensation to it.

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- Myriam Hildotter said 23 hours, 17 minutes ago:

I was explaining this concept to Miss Swift. She has studied music theory, so she was able to help me a little.

She played for me what is known in music theory as a tritone. Below is a kinnie using tritones, if you would like to hear. I will warn you, that it is quite unpleasant to listen to. I would suggest listening for just a couple of seconds to get the idea, and then stop the kinnie. There are Bongo images at the end of the kinnie, so you probably do not want to listen to the entire kinnie. Actually, I just looked on Elektra to find one of these tritones, and I found that tritones in classical music are used to signify hell or the devil.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NwBu0PTzqs

Interestingly enough, one can use tritones in music at times, without being *too* unpleasant, if they are resolved by playing a subsequent more harmonious chord.

In thinking about fuwa, it really does have the same sensation as the kinnie of the unresolved tritones. I am trying to find an example of a resolved tritone, but I am having trouble finding one without a mascûl voice explaining the music theory.

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- Sushuri said 22 hours, 45 minutes ago:

I think wa is a more specific term than Thamë. They could in some cases be used interchangeably and in others not, I think. I am not sure how far wa is seen as a cosmic principle, though I imagine it must originally have been, and as we have all been noticing, the cosmic/metaphysical understanding seems very close to the surface in many current Japanese anime.

The question of conflict on an intellectual level is actually rather different in the Motherland from West Telluria. There are certain assumptions we make:

1: There are right and wrong ideas, and our purpose is to find the right one, not to defend our “own” view.

2: There are also many perspectives and traditions that express right knowledge and it is improper to dispute between them. All “noble paths” deserve respect.

3: Maids are naturally in harmony. If there is disharmony, then something is wrong: usually either someone is misunderstanding (1) or different perspectives are being improperly compared (2). The aim of discussion is to discover truth, which is always harmonious. It is to restore and resolve any apparent disagreement back into harmony, and certainly on the intellectual level we believe that all disagreement is only apparent.

I am not sure if I am expressing this very clearly! (2) *could* sound like the Tellurian idea of “equal and opposed views” (or “everyone is entitled to her own opinion”), but that isn’t what it is at all. It is a recognition that there are different approaches to the same truth, and that they do not need to be resolved. Importantly also they are not *individual* opinions but *group* traditions or perspectives. A legitimate and traditional group has wise elders and teachings and even if it is not our approach we respect it. An individual, on the other hand, can be in error and all thamelic (right-thinking, good-willed) maids want to distinguish truth from error and adhere to truth.

Where there are strong differences of intellectual opinion (which is not all that common in the Motherland) the approach, depending on the relationship, will be to sidestep or ignore them, or to *ask a chara* that is, someone who can teach us what is right.

This last seems so obvious that it is hard to believe West Tellurians don’t do it. They would not make up their own physics or their own biology, where there was a question they would go to some authoritative source for information. But they appear to put matters of metaphysics, philosophy etc. into a special category where people are free to invent at random – and then to argue about their inventions.

Very odd it seems to me! But perhaps I am missing something.

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- Myriam Hildotter said 21 hours, 14 minutes ago:

It does seem odd and quite obvious, but I think that in West Telluria, people actually quite illiterate on matters of metaphysics, philosophy, thealogy, etc. Even those that are *supposed* to be *charas*, professors and clergy are quite ignorant with respect to these matters. Because of this, I think that people think that there can not really be a right and wrong answer to these matters, so they feel free to speculate and argue their speculations as if they were proven fact.

I asked Miss Swift to watch Suite Precure with me, as she has studied music theory at a *very* distinguished university. I was hoping that she would be able to point out to me metaphysical connections that I might have missed because of my limited knowledge regarding music. She told me that she did not learn *anything* about the metaphysics of music. She *did* learn about the physics of music, and told me about that, but she did not remember learning much, if anything, about the metaphysics of music.

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- Myriam Hildotter said 20 hours, 50 minutes ago:

Miss Swift just let me look at her copy of Grout, The History of Western Music (3rd Edition)(I have heard that this is a standard text on the subject in West Telluria), and she pointed me to the 1st Chapter, which is the only place that she would have learned anything about the

metaphysics of music at all. I have not gotten very far into the chapter, but the discussion of metaphysics is firmly rooted in the idea that these were past beliefs, and they are not relevant to the present. (Although, there are references to Plato that I might read when I have the chance). Anyways, here is a quote that is indicative of the instruction:

> *For some Greek thinkers music also had a close connection with astronomy, not only through the identity of mathematical laws that were thought to underlie both the system of musical intervals and the system of the heavenly bodies, but also through a particular correspondence of certain modes and even certain notes with the various planets. Such magical connotations and extensions of music were common among all Eastern peoples. The idea was given poetic form by Plato in the beautiful myth of the "music of the spheres"; it is echoed by writers on music throughout the Middle Ages, and appears also in Shakespeare and Milton. Ptolemy, one of the most important of the ancient writers on music, was also the leading astronomer of antiquity–as, in our own day, many of the best amateurs of music are physical scientists.*

> If this is the instruction from one of the leading sources of “authority” on music theory, is it any wonder that West Tellurians who are interested in metaphysics tend to believe that there is nowhere to get true instruction on these matters.

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- Sushuri said 19 hours, 46 minutes ago:

> So: “This is what everyone else in the world has always believed, but we know better”. What insolence!

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- Myriam Hildotter said 18 hours, 9 minutes ago:

> Oh, I agree that this is extreme insolence, but that is what children are taught in the U.S. in public education, in every subject, from earliest childhood. At least, that is what *I* remember being taught. This is taught in math, history, science, social studies, and well, in *everything*….that the wisdom from the past is “superstition” and we now know better.
>
> You know, I thought this was a tangent, but now that I think of it, it is not a tangent at all. If children are taught this insolence regarding our foremothers, it is no wonder that there is no wa in the culture as a whole.

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- Elefarya Rosamunda, Portia Chandrick, Pooka said 13 hours, 49 minutes ago:

> I'm trying to fight it in raising Wee Maid, but gosh it's so pervasive. I've got some hope, though. She's convinced that the winged beings who rolled the stone away from Jesus's tomb were fairies. It gave us a chance to talk about how some people call Dea's helpers one thing and some people call Dea's helpers another thing, but they're still "vorry vorry" nice either way. And she is sure (correctly) that they are real.
>
> Too much to hope nobody will tell her otherwise; I merely hope by the time they do she nods politely and then laughs after they leave.

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- Dianne Lindqvist said 5 hours, 24 minutes ago:

> Sometimes I regret not having had children, but I will admit that I do not envy the choices that mothers have in raising their children in the Pit. It seems like the only thing to do is do one's best, and hope that stands up to the pressures all around.

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- Charis said 1 hour, 47 minutes ago:

> This seemed to me quite similar to the thinking in the Motherland:
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> In Japan, there is a strong expectation that a dispute should not and will not arise; even when one does occur, it is to be solved by mutual

understanding. Thus, there is no *raison d'être* for the majority rule that is so widespread in other modern societies; instead, the principle of rule by consensus prevails.

It is obvious that a judicial decision does not fit and even endangers relationships. When people are socially organized in small groups, and when subordination of individual desires in favor of group agreement is idealized, the group's stability and the security of individual members are threatened by attempts to regulate conduct by universalistic standards. The impact is greater when such an effort is reinforced by an organized political power.

Furthermore, the litigious process, in which both parties seek to justify their position by objective standards, and the emergence of a judicial decision based thereon tend to convert situational interests into firmly consolidated and independent ones. Because of the resulting disorganization of traditional social groups, resort to litigation has been condemned as morally wrong, subversive, and rebellious.

Takeyoshi Kawashima and Yosiyuki Noda, *Dispute Resolution in Contemporary Japan*

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